

April 14th.

Sycamore.
Blackthorn.
Mouse-ear Chickweed.
Early Scorpion Grass.
Field Lady's Mantle.
Ash.
Ground Ivy.
Moschatel.
Stitchwort.
Dog's Mercury.
Umbelliferous jagged
Chickweed.

Crosswort.
Golden Saxifrage.
Strawberry-leaved Potentil.
Yew.
Lesser Duckweed.
Water Starwort.
Chaff-weed.
Ivy-leaved Buttercup.
Ladies' Smock.
Lesser Spearwort.
Wood-sorrel.
Hazel.

April 15th.

Mare's Tail.
Common Equisetum.
Lamb's Lettuce.
Lesser Periwinkle.
Greater Periwinkle.

Hairy Violet.
Round-leaved Geranium.
Lesser Stitchwort.
Knotted Caulis.

April 18th.

Common Willow.
Bracken.
Red Campion.
Dwarf Willow.
Black Currant.
Box.

Pansy.
Spring Vetch.
Bent Grass.
Fiorin Grass.
Water Crowfoot.

April 19th.

Buttercup.

Ribwort Plantain.

April 23rd.

Herb Robert.
Thrift.
Venus' Comb.
Hedge Parsley.

Burr Chevril.
Vernal Carex.
Sea Arrow Grass.

NATURE NOTES.

February 22nd.—Half-term holiday. The day was quite a surprise. After so much cold, wet weather this auspicious day turned out clear, sunshiny and warm. The deep blue sky, interspersed with white masses of fleecy clouds above the mountain tops covered with fresh green, made an ideal spring picture, especially when the sunshine glinted on the slopes, making the blue hollows look bluer still. Skelwith Force was very full and strong; Colwyth Force too was looking its loveliest with the fine spray playing and sparkling in the sunshine. We saw a great many different kinds of birds as we drove along. Our old friends the gay chaffinches of course were there, and the starlings. The blackbird, missel thrush, blue-tit and great-tit, yellow hammer and red-start were descried over the fields. By the Little Langdale Tarn we saw two beautiful magpies, which were kind enough not to fly away till we were quite close, then the clear black and white of their wings and feathers showed distinctly against the background of meadow green. A coot floated on the clear surface of the Tarn. At Blea Tarn we paused to listen to the echo. We gave a united shout—it was wonderful the way the echo resounded and seemed to reverberate on and on from rock to rock: the bugle call was still more marked.

After an early lunch we walked through the Wrynose Pass by the three-county stone, and overlooked the valley on the Cumberland side. On our way to Dungeon Ghyll we got a splendid view of the surrounding crags and peaks. The Wetherlam, Wrynose, Crinkle Crag, Pike o' Bliscoe, Blay Crag and the familiar Langdale Pikes. As we came home we were delighted to see the golden eye on Grasmere as well as some pochards.

February 23rd.—The little rue-leaved saxifrage is showing its sweet, white blossoms nestling in the centre of the sturdy trifoliate leaves. The blackbird is singing in almost full power, while the starling is imitating his song in a remarkably

clever manner. To-day is in marked contrast to yesterday, a wet grey pall lies over mountain and valley, whilst the sun has quite hidden himself.

February 24th.—To-day we went for a bird walk. Quite a collection of birds was to be seen at the Waterhead Marshes. There were four plovers, three carrion crows, two sea-gulls picking and scratching in one part, a coot was swimming among the rushes, and a number of wagtails seemed to be playing hide-and-seek with each other. We could see the gulls were herring gulls; one was quite young, it had a large spoon bill, its feathers were fawn colour. The older gull had a bright red spot on its bill, and a black stripe on the tail feathers, dotted with white. The plovers were green, with a long crest at the back of the head. We saw two meadow pipits, a lively little wren, and numbers of song thrushes and blackbirds.

March 9th.—We watched a flock of plovers take their flight for the Shap Fells many miles away. Miss Kitching told us they go every year about this time. It is remarkable how the rooks assemble in the leafless trees just now. One tree seemed to support a rook on every twig.

March 11th.—We noticed many signs of the coming of spring. The alders are reddening, and the birches purpling. The ash trees gleam white, and the chestnut buds are *very* sticky; the broom is budding, the sycamore buds are greener, all the birds are singing most sweetly, and the sun is making his heat felt powerfully. The rooks are splashing themselves in their river bath. One butterfly has been seen.

March 16th.—We saw the grey wagtail for the first time to-day by the Stock, and watched him some time. He seemed quite happy, though the day was as grey as his dress. The curlews have come—they were calling all around us throughout the night.

April 18th.—We saw the yellow wagtail by the Brathay and watched it skirting the water. One could have imagined him a big golden butterfly. Its movements were very quick and agile. It never seemed stationary, even when it alighted—always quivering and trying to balance itself with its long tail.

May 4th.—We went to Dove's Nest Woods and found quite a large bed of toothwort. Miss Barnett tried hard to get up a root far enough down to see the tiny adhesive discs

that clasp the tree on which they are parasites. We gathered a flower of adoxa to notice how beautifully practical and symmetrical were the arrangements of the numbers of petals in its tiny florets—five in each floret on the sides of the head, and only four petals on the top one.

May 16th.—On our bird walk to-day we went to some fields off the Sweden Bridge Road. We seated ourselves beneath some firs and kept quiet. Soon we were rewarded. Two greenfinches, male and female, perched themselves on a branch near. We could see the male bird splendidly; he was a greeny yellow, with a thick, short bill, and a spot of black just behind it. A redstart entertained us a long time. He was most beautiful, with fluffy, orange golden feathers on his breast, a tiny white patch on his black head. Every now and then he darted from his perch on the twig of a hawthorn, down to the grass and back again, as if his sharp eyes could see insects from that height. A good many yellow hammers were flying around. Some tree pipits dropped down, parachute like, from high distances. Presently a hawk rose and stayed poised motionless in the air some minutes. We could not see what kind he was, but judged him to be the sparrow hawk. On our way back we watched a baby thrush; it was able to hop, but not to fly. We could not get it as it hid from us in the crevice of a stone wall. A spotted fly-catcher hopped about overhead. It had a thin, rather long bill, and very bright eyes.

May 20th.—We climbed to Ivy Crag. Two cuckoos flew around, calling to each other as they circled round, and then flew off. A wheatear crossed our path, and later we saw a kestrel high in air. Very near to us a tree pipit was engaged in searching about for insects. He allowed us to come quite close. We could see the striping of his back and wings very plainly, and the sort of speckled stripe on his grey breast. Some meadow pipits were flitting from tree to tree. The wood wren and the willow wren interested us a good deal. The former gave us a splendid chance to see and hear him; he had such nimble movements among the branches, and such animated little tones. The spotted fly-catcher attracted our attention, too.

June 9th.—We chose Fairfield Basin for our walk to-day. Buxton Jim was grand. We were fascinated. The old rocks with glacial scratchings and polishings—the huge boulders

brought down by ice years ago—how we wished they could tell us their story! By the roadside the butterwort was curling its leaves over its insect victims. The wind was very high and overhead the clouds were moving rapidly in opposite directions. Whilst watching them we saw a pair of hawks. The male (a buzzard) was a splendid fellow; as the wind caused him to swerve we could see the glossy brown of his back, and the grey of his breast. Mounting to a great height he remained motionless for awhile, then suddenly and swiftly swooped down to some object on the other side of the mountain. He looked almost like a large black ball in descending.

E. J. C.

OBSERVATIONS OF MONS. A. DE FRANCE MADE DURING HIS CAPTIVITY AMONG THE ARABS.

[From a Translation.]

ANIMALS.

The horse does not work before he is three years old. At this age he is mounted by children. He is destined for war, but the mares are reserved for breeding.

The Arabs only crop the hair until they are six years old; after this time they allow it to grow. Old horses are distinguished by magnificent manes and tails.

The horses are of the middle size, rather small than large; their form is lean and strong; they live entirely upon barley and straw; they drink once a day, receive no attention, and remain exposed night and day before the tent to cold, heat, or rain. Those belonging to wealthy chiefs have the forefeet shod.

They live constantly with man, whose faithful companions they are, and this continuance of association renders them very docile; they never kick.

The old horses, when no longer serviceable for war, draw the plough in the fields, together with the oxen.

CAMELS.—There are very few camels in the province of Oran. These animals are serviceable only during expeditions in the desert, and are of very little use in the mountains. They remain three or four days without eating, and are very particular in their food.

MULES.—They carry the baggage; they are small, sorry animals, and injured by hard work.

ASSES.—They carry provisions to market; they are generally very small.

OXEN.—The Arabs make use of these animals for working and carrying burthens. They are very small and lean; they work along with mules or old horses, bound two-and-two. The extremity of the plough, the share of which is of wood, is fastened to a pole which passes under the belly of the animal, and to which are attached traces which are fixed to the horns of the ox, or to the neck of the horse.

SHEEP, GOATS.—These animals are very numerous, but I have not seen any very fine fleeces. The goat-skins are made into bottles, in which they keep butter, oil, and water. The Arabs preserve skins very badly, and send them to Blida and Morocco, where more skilful tanners prepare them better.

AGRICULTURE, TEMPERATURE.

The Arabs have a great quantity of land at their disposal, but they till it very badly, only giving it a single turn over. When they meet a palm tree or brambles, they mark out a circle round the obstacle. They cultivate wheat and barley, but grow very few vegetables, and those only in their season.

During my stay it was the time for radishes and turnips. They have peas, beans, potatoes, onions, garlic, and a great quantity of pimento.

Many fruit trees are cultivated in the gardens round the towns; and cucumbers, gourds, water melons, and melons are in abundance.

The grass is eaten by the horses.

The greatest part of the country is uncultivated and uninhabited; but beautiful plains are to be met with. The most beautiful and fertile spot is on the banks of the Onet-Mina.

The winter is rainy. The excessive heat of the summer quickly dries up the rivulets, and the waters which cover the plains.

The nights are always very cool and damp. In my opinion this dampness and cold are very unfavourable to the cultivation of sugar, cotton, coffee, indigo, etc.; these colonial productions, at the most, would only grow on the sea coast, and in a few of the plains.

The climate of this country has a great similarity to that of the southern provinces of France, where we see lofty mountains, the summits of which are covered with snow even during the hottest part of the summer.

In the mountains the temperature is very severe.

The Arabs are subject to rheumatic pains in consequence of the damp and cold.

In our journey from Miliana to Blida, we passed through a wood of magnificent olive trees. They might obtain a great quantity of oil in this country.

CHILDREN IN FICTION.

There is a vast difference between children in fiction and fictitious children. It would almost seem, in considering literature as a whole, that until modern days we had never had the former at all. Children's appearances in fiction may be sub-divided into two headings—children in literature and children in children's books. In former days, before growth and evolution and heredity and environment were the common catch phrases in the mouths of men, children were not introduced into literature any more than they were into the lives of their elders. The classics are almost childless—Homer has one little boy, Hector's son; Shakespeare has two—Arthur and the son of Hermione, Mamillius. Corneille (or is it Racine) has the little king Josiah, but these are children whom the force of circumstances drove into prominence—they are in no sense carefully-drawn children's characters; even Arthur, the most lifelike, is far too fond of metaphysical soliloquy. Even in what we may call more modern classics children are always spoken of from the "grown-up" point of view. Charlotte Brontë makes Jane Eyre describe her childhood, and bitter reading it is; but they are childish woes as remembered through added years, and her little pupil, the dancer's daughter, is sketched rather than drawn. The girls in "Villette," too, are described only from the teacher's point of view. George Elliot, who was nothing if not analytical, has drawn one marvellous picture of child life—Maggie Tulliver, but it was to show us the causes of her maturer character. Before considering the changed attitude of more modern writers, let us look at the old fashioned books about children *for* children. Dear Goody Twoshoes! Strange as she now seems, the childlike heart of Goldsmith drew a real child there; but genius is free from the limitations of its age. But oh, the books of our great-grandmothers! We have them reprinted now, and chuckle over them; but think of girls who would now be enjoying Herrick, or Tennyson, or Kipling, or Stevenson in